Congreve’s common passions

CONGREVE'S COMMON PASSIONS:

HUMOR, AFFECTATION AND THE WORK OF SATIRE

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In 1698, William Congreve's irritable response to Jeremy Collier protests the naïve equivalency Collier drew between the playwright and his immoral characters: "it were very hard," he complains, "that a Painter should be believ'd to resemble all the ugly Faces that he draws" (2011a, 9). Congreve's deployment of the proverbial analogy between painting and poetry[1] stakes his central claim for the significance of satire: that it paints the world in sharp and truthful outline. A "Satyrical Wit" he observes in 1695, "Observes, and *shews things as they are*" (2011b, 3: 66). In the same year, in *Love for Love*, Congreve's sharp-tongued observer, Scandal, boasts that he "can shew you your own Picture, and most of your Acquaintance to the Life, and as like as at *Knellers*[2]" (1967, 232; I.i.617-9).[3] Valentine, Congreve's rake-hero and Scandal's friend, declares that "indeed, he speaks truth now. . . . he has the Pictures of all that have refus'd him: If Satyrs, Descriptions, Characters and Lampoons are Pictures." Scandal responds:

Many thanks to the anonymous readers of this essay, whose time and care made this a much better piece.

[1] See, for an influential contemporary discussion of this classical analogy (*ut pictura poesis*), Dryden's essay, "A Parallel betwixt Painting and Poetry." Though it is primarily focused later in the century, see also Hagstrum's *Sister Arts*.

[2] Godfrey Kneller's Academy in Great Queen Street. Kneller (later, Sir Godfrey Kneller, bart.) was the principal portraitist of his day. For the connection between Kneller and Congreve, see Julie Stone Peters's *Congreve, the Drama, and the Printed Word*.

[3] All following parenthetical citations of Congreve's plays refer to this 1967 Chicago edition by Herbert Davis. I have chosen not to use D.F. McKenzie's 2011 Oxford edition of Congreve's works to cite the text of his plays, though I have used it for the prose works. McKenzie's edition prioritizes Congreve's engagement with print culture, and thus uses the heavily edited and polished 1710 *Plays* as its source text. Davis's edition uses source text much closer to Congreve's plays as they were first performed.

> Yes, mine are most in black and white.—And yet there are some set out in their true Colours, both Men and Women. I can shew you Pride, Folly, Affectation, Wantonness, Inconstancy, Covetousness, Dissimulation, Malice, and Ignorance, all in one Piece. Then I can shew you Lying, Foppery, Vanity, Cowardice, Bragging, Lechery, Impotence, and Ugliness in another Piece; and yet one of these is a celebrated Beauty, and t'other a profest Beau. (1967, 233; I.i.622-33)

Scandal's plain speaking – he sketches in sharp contrasts, and in the "black and white" of cheap engravings as well as in "Paintings" (233; I.i.634)[4] – aligns one of the truisms of eighteenth-century literary criticism with the observational drive of empiricism. Scandal's taxonomic approach[5] lists qualities and characters rather than appearances, which might seem to set him apart from empirical observation. But one of the principal insights of the late seventeenth-century scientific revolution was that observation alone was insufficient to assess the world. Tools, both mechanical and theoretical, help us both to make and to interpret these observations. Natural philosophy in this moment revealed, above all, the hidden life of things.[6] Essential qualities and characteristics invisible to the naked eye appeared under Leeuwenhoek's microscope; Locke's inward eye surveyed what passed inside the mind; and Newton's mathematics predicted the motion of celestial bodies both unseen and threatening.[7] As much as it ordered the world we see,

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[4] See Julie Stone Peters's *Congreve, the Drama, and the Printed Word*, chapter 5: "Scandal's Portraits: Engravings and Visual Imitation," on engraving, wood cuts, and the circulation of cheap print materials.

[5] Foucault famously named taxonomy as the Enlightenment episteme in *The Order of Things*. Refinements and critiques of his thesis have, for the most part, upheld the sense that this new fashion of ordering the world was an essential contribution of the scientific revolution. See, for example, Ian Hacking's *Taming of Chance*. See also Peters, *Congreve*, 135.

[6] See Helen Thompson's *Fictional Matter*, in which she argues the centrality of invisible causes to the structure of both modern science and the novel.

[7] Newton's predictions about the orbit of Halley's comet led to the publication of the *Principia* (1687).

empirical science and philosophy revealed the fabric of an invisible world. When Locke imagines, for example, a man with "Microscopical Eyes," he pinpoints his ability to see "into the secret Composition, and radical Texture of Bodies" (1975; II.xxiii.12).[8] In this context, Congreve takes up literature's long-standing capacity to reveal our inward motions as a sign of its fundamental kinship with the aims of Lockean empiricism. While experimental philosophy uncovered the nature of nature, literature and philosophy together uncovered the nature of human nature.

Congreve's comic theory thus draws together the relatively new sensationalist model of the psyche proposed by Locke in 1690[9] and older theories of the humors and the passions. In the process, he moves from a vocal effort, in 1695, to sustain humors comedy, to a new examination affectation in 1700. His letter to John Dennis on humors comedy insists, with ever-increasing specificity, on the definition of a humors character and the status of the humors as central to comic theory, though he leaves open the possibility that affectation might provide valuable comic material: "I don't say but that very entertaining and useful Characters, and proper for Comedy, may be drawn from Affectations, and those other Qualities, which I have endeavoured to distinguish from Humour." However, he is firm in his ranking of humor above these other sources of comedy, declaring that he "would not have such imposed on the World for Humour, nor esteem'd of equal Value with it" (2011b, 3: 66). In his dedication to *The Way of the World*,

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[8] Lorraine Daston remarks that the "peculiar economy of attention cultivated by the Enlightenment naturalists was pointillist, magnifying, and therefore deliberately repetitive. Visually and intellectually, the observer pulverized the object into a mosaic of details" (99). Thompson also finds this description compelling, arguing that Locke is pointing, here, to the ever present impact on us of the world's fabric, regardless of our capacity to apprehend it (86-7).

[9] Congreve's engagement with empiricism has long been recognized. See Holland 1959 and Jarvis 1972. Locke's *Essay* was a direct influence. There are suggestive echoes of Locke's language in Congreve's *Amendments of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations* (1698), and in *Love for Love* (1695), and the third edition of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is catalogued in his library. See Congreve 2011c, 3:513.

just five years later, he says he is interested in examining "an affected Wit; a Wit, which at the same time that it is affected, is also false" (1967, 390). He also makes a notorious distinction between a "Witwoud" and a "Truewit" here. Congreve's Witwoud is a response to Jonson's Truewit in *Epicoene* (1616) – his affectation of wit makes him the obverse of Jonson's humorous Truewit.[10] Congreve pays homage to, yet simultaneously refuses the humors comedy context of Jonson's *Epicoene*, creating a contrasting character who embodies the empty mimicry of wit that seems to him to be ubiquitous in the 1690s. Congreve manages, in representing "affected Wit" in *The Way of the World*, to send up his dramatic contemporaries; to affiliate himself with Jonson; to forge a new rationale for satire; and to raise the profile of wit comedy. His reassessment of the work of satire contributes to eighteenth-century comic developments: the rise of sentimentalism and the new theoretical commitment to comic amelioration rather than satiric excoriation.[11] But his new model of satire also reconfigures the self, insisting simultaneously on its Lockean origins and on its inherently emotional foundations, prefiguring philosophical models like Hutcheson's, Malebranche's, Hume's, and Smith's that married the passions to the groundwork of empiricist cognition, producing the eighteenth-century structure of sympathy.[12] Congreve's transition from humors to affectation is a broader transition from one model of the psyche to another. The one, with a long history in the English literary tradition, is the humoral model. The other is empiricist. The first is expressive; the second, mimetic.

From Humor to Affectation:

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[10] Jonson's is the dominant theory of humors comedy at the end of the seventeenth century. In addition to Congreve's admiring mention of Jonson in his letter "Concerning Humour in Comedy" (2011b, 3: 65-7), two expensive folio editions of Jonson's *Works* appear in his library (2011c, 3: 509). Congreve is associated more closely with the "wit" comedy of the Fletcherian tradition than with Jonsonian humors comedy, but he nonetheless uses the stronger theoretical tradition associated with the humors to ground his critical writing.

[11] See Corman 1993.

[12] See Plamper 2015, 22-3 and Dixon 2006, esp. chapter 3: "From Movements to Mechanisms."

Empiricism is usually characterized as having to do with an exhaustive focus on sensory data. Until fairly recently, a narrative of the empiricist self as closed, contained, carefully bounded and disciplined was standard. More recent assessments have interrogated this narrative, proposing an eighteenth-century self characterized by permeability, instability, and incoherence.[13] For Congreve, the fascination of empiricism consisted in its ability to reduce the significance of the boundary between mind and matter, self and other, to make common the experience of multiple observers, and to open the self to impression. Congreve's empiricist self prefigures the confusion of surfaces and depths that will come to characterize theories of sympathy.[14] In *Love for Love*, Valentine, in his pretended madness, calls Angelica "the reflection of Heav'n in a Pond, and he that leaps at you is sunk" (1967, 292; IV.i.636-7). Angelica is both a "reflection" and a pool. She is simultaneously surface and depth, above and below, truth (heaven) and artifice (its picture). Congreve brings together here Milton's image of Eve gazing at herself in "a liquid plain . . . Pure as the expanse of heaven" (1968, 639; *PL* 4, ll. 455-6) and Locke's analogy of mind and mirror (1975, 118; II.i.25). Valentine continues: "You are all white, a sheet of lovely spotless Paper, when you first are Born; but you are to be scrawl'd and blotted by every Goose's Quill" (1967, 292; IV.i.637-9). Valentine deliberately yokes specifically textual and literary metaphors – a blot, a quill; a mirrored pool – to two of Locke's most famous metaphors

[13] Critics are increasingly aware of the permeability of the empiricist self. See, for example, Cathy Caruth's early contribution to this discussion, *Empirical Truths and Critical Fictions*, Adela Pinch's *Strange Fits of Passion*, and Jonathan Kramnick's *Actions and Objects*. Of common interpretations of Locke's epistemology, Kramnick writes: "the story about epistemology tends to look at the first two books of the *Essay*, and to emphasize on that basis a model of self-enclosure and inwardness [whereas] the story I would tell about consciousness and persons looks also at the later parts of the *Essay* and has a more ontological bent. How does consciousness arise from matter, and where are we to locate the sources and limits of actions?" (2010, 97).

[14] See Pinch 1996.

of the mind.[15] For Congreve, making art and making a self are analogous processes.

Congreve is mostly interested in the intersection of the old terms of comic art – the humors, ridicule, wit – with modern models of the self. His 1695 letter to John Dennis "Concerning Humour in Comedy" is really an essay about shifting the humors – which explain psychology by physical pathology – to something closer to an individualistic theory of personality. He begins by working with the seventeenth-century commonplace about humor: that it refers to personal peculiarities. But he renovates this theory of antisocial behavior in the service of the newly emphatic individualism of the eighteenth century to make, finally, a pseudo-nationalist claim about the ways in which English "liberty" produces a heterogeneous, and therefore sociable nation.[16] Oddly, though humor is an expression of problematic English peculiarity, a call to satirize it was also a nationalistic rallying-point.

Affectation and hypocrisy, however, the common targets of late seventeenth-century comic ridicule, are terms that fit somewhat uneasily into the humors comedy frequently lauded as the comic ideal.[17] While humors comedy, at least in theory, targets the expression of personal peculiarities, hypocrisy and affectation are forms of disguise; by definition, they *prevent* the expression of the genuine self with its individual oddities.[18] Congreve is concerned to untangle

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[15] Locke also compares the mind to "white Paper" (1975, 104; II.i.2).

[16] For a discussion of the relationship between humors and English liberty, and its evolution over the course of the eighteenth century, see Freeman 2002, 209-10.

[17] See, for example, Shadwell's preface to *The Sullen Lovers* (1668). Dryden, who quarrels with Shadwell's rigidity and champions Shakespeare over Jonson in his *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668), nonetheless holds up Jonson as "the more correct Poet" (1971, 58) and Congreve, though qualifying his praise, declares that he "cannot enough admire [Ben Jonson], for his great Mastery of true Humour in Comedy" (2011b, 3: 65). See Corman 1984.

[18] Realizing the difficulty of promoting as a comic ideal a model of comic character that refuses the possibility of amelioration – if humors are natural and inborn, they're not our fault, and comedy that attempts to purge them is cruel to "silly folly" which is a "natural imperfection" (1966, 4) – Shadwell tries with a notable lack of success to promote the idea that humor is just a

these terms of art, developing a kind of taxonomy of comic terminology. Carefully distinguishing humor from wit, unnatural folly, "*Personal Defect*," "*External Habit*," and affectation, he identifies the processes by which we come to have certain appearances or behaviors as crucial to their definitions:

> *Humour* I take, either to be born with us, and so of a Natural Growth; or else to be grafted into us, by some accidental change in the Constitution, or revolution of the Internal Habit of Body; by which it becomes, if I may so call it, Naturaliz'd.
>
> *Humour* is from Nature, *Habit* from Custom; and *Affectation* from Industry.
>
> *Humour*, shews us as we *are*.
>
> *Habit*, shews us, as we appear, under a forcible Impression.
>
> *Affectation*, shews what we would be, under a Voluntary Disguise.
>
> Tho here I would observe by the way, that a continued Affectation, may in time become a Habit. (2011b, 180)

We can see here that humour is a part of our bodily composition, in line with general medical definitions of the humours prevailing at the time. So Congreve observes that "sometimes, Mens Humours may be opposed when there is really no specific Difference between them; only a greater proportion of the same, in one than t'other; occasion'd by his having more Flegm, or Choller, or whatever the Constitution is, from whence their Humours derive their Source" (184).

Congreve describes the relationship of the humors to the self:

> Our Humour has relation to us, and to what proceeds from us, as the Accidents have to a Substance; it is a Colour, Taste, and Smell, diffused thro' all; tho' our Actions are never so many, and different in Form, they are all Splinters of the same Wood, and have naturally

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type of affectation in his dedication to *The Virtuoso* (1676). Congreve's letter to Dennis in 1695 is really an extended refutation of Shadwell's argument.

> one Complexion; which tho' it may be disguised by Art, yet cannot be wholly changed: We may paint it with other Colours, but we cannot change the Grain. So the natural Sound of an Instrument will be distinguish'd, tho' the Notes expressed by it, are never so various, and the Diversions never so many. (181)

He draws here on the common understanding of the relation between substance and accidents: accidents are the tangible evidence of substance that, taken together, form our working idea of a thing. For Congreve, our "accidents," the expressions of our natural humor, are simply the external evidence of our essential selves. More interestingly, however, Congreve reflects on Locke's comparison, in his chapter "Of Identity and Diversity" (II.xxii) in the *Essay*, of a person to a tree. This chapter, perhaps Locke's best-known chapter, deals with personal identity. He uses the analogy of an oak tree to make two key points: first, that living beings have a different kind of identity from "Masses of Matter" (330; II.xxii.3), and second, that human identity must necessarily have a bodily component (331-2; II.xxii.6). Congreve's insistence, then, that our "Actions" are "Splinters of the same Wood," and that they participate in our "Complexion" or humor, is not simply an argument for a consistency of character representation – recall that this is a how-to for playwrights, and much of Congreve's purpose is to instruct us on how to write characters in which the "Manner" is "adapted to the *Humour*" (2011b, 180) – it is also an argument for the significance of bodily continuity in determining the self. Here, as in Locke's essay, we can know one person from another, in spite of "Art" or "paint," by virtue of the "organized Body" which allows us to connect the "*Embryo*" to the "Man" without confusing him with "*Seth, Ismael, Socrates, Pilate*, St. *Austin* [Augustine], [or] *Caesar Borgia*" (Locke 1975, 332; II.xxii.6). Typically, Congreve moves the comparison from the natural world to artificial creation. Where Locke's analogy is a tree, Congreve's is a musical instrument. The reshaping of

Locke's analogy underlines the significance of definitions of the self in art and aesthetics. Splinters and sounds, bodies and aesthetic productions, emerge out of "the same Wood." Fundamentally, humors ground us in the body, providing a stable basis for self that links action and person, aesthetic instrument and aesthetic product, the self in one guise to the self in another.

Congreve is also influenced by Ben Jonson's more specific understanding of humors comedy as a genre that displays bodily pathologies "*by metaphor* . . . As when some one peculiar quality / Doth so possess a man that it doth draw / All his affects, his spirits, and his powers / In their confluxions all to run one way" (Jonson 2001, 118; ll.101-6, my emphasis). Though humor is clearly about temperament, and Congreve's definition absorbs Jonson's abstraction of humor from physiological disorder to metaphorical representation, he seems, in the letter to Dennis, to understand the source of the humors to be unequivocally physiological, of the natural constitution or of the "Internal Habit of Body." "Dissimulation," he argues, "may by Degrees, become more easy to our practice; but it can never absolutely Transubstantiate us into what we would seem: It will always be in some proportion a Violence upon Nature" (2011b, 69). Congreve's use of the term "transubstantiate" is careful; a point of serious theological contention in the period, it means specifically a shift from one *material substance* to another. Again, he suggests that our consistent identity inheres in our material beings.

Affectation is defined in opposition to humor: if humor is "from Nature," affectation is conversely self-made: "from Industry." Affectation is to humor as a "voluntary Disguise" is to the self, as the mask is to reality, as artifice is to nature.[19] This seemingly straightforward distinction is undermined, however, by Congreve's final caveat: "a continued Affectation may in time become a Habit." We know that "Habit is from Custom," but we also know that a

[19] See Holland 1959, 61-2. Holland reads Congreve's purpose as, in the end, to expose the "nature" beneath the affected mask.

"revolution" in the "Habit of Body" can "naturalize" a habit such that it becomes a humor. That this aside makes the distinction between affectation and humor (or affectation and nature) unsustainable is a fact of which Congreve is well aware. In *Love for Love*, Valentine declares: "I know no effectual Difference between continued Affectation and Reality" (1967, 254; III.i.40-1). Affectation is really the borrowing of another identity, an extraneous behavior, that comes to be more or less successfully incorporated into the self. The appropriative move of affectation may then be reluctantly associated with other kinds of mimicry: sympathetic imitation, moral emulation, mimetic art. Affectation models for us the empiricist self.

In his dedication to the *Way of the World*, Congreve reflects that the grossness of the usual run of comic characters "mov'd me to design some Characters, which should appear ridiculous not so much thro' a natural Folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the stage) as thro' an affected Wit; a Wit, which at the same time that it is affected, is also false" (1967, 390). Here, Congreve is not simply shifting the ideal target of satire from humor to affectation, but also implying that the *only* appropriate targets of satire are affected characters. If "natural Folly" is "incorrigible," and thus not proper for the stage, then surely any incorrigible quality, any quality natural to or coeval with the self, is also less than ideal as a satiric target. The only adequate targets are redeemable; in other words, good satiric targets are those whose vices can be separated from the self and cast out or cast off.

Hypocrisy, quite the opposite of humor, might seem then to be the perfect satiric target. It should be possible to reconcile it with a theory of humors comedy, as Jonson had in the hypocritical figure of Mosca in *Volpone* (1606). But it is through his exploration of hypocrisy that Congreve's notion of individual personality defined by humor begins to show its faultlines. Humor and hypocrisy, he discovers, both rely on an intransigent material self, analogous, ideally,

to the eternal order of the universe, and incompatible with Lockean sensationalism. Hypocrisy is the theme of *The Double-Dealer* in 1693. The double nature of Maskwell, Congreve's villain, rather heavy-handedly thematizes the play, driving home, by contrast, the singleness, solidity, and coherence of ordinary identity. Lady Touchwood, in a speech that literalizes Maskwell's doubleness, condemns him as "a sedate, a thinking Villain . . . one, who is no more moved with the reflection of his Crimes, than of his Face; but walks unstartled from the Mirrour, and streight forgets the hideous form" (2011c, I.i.328-32: p.135-6). Maskwell's easy separation into monster and mask makes for dull incorrigibility, in the end, and Congreve's experiment with hypocrisy only reveals the limitations of theorizing the self as form and reflection or nature and mask: Maskwell takes the mask and leaves his "hideous form" behind. Maskwell's best-known line – "No Mask like open Truth to cover Lies,/ As to go naked is the best disguise" (190; V.i.100-1) – calls attention to Congreve's self-conscious theorizing, in which the easy satiric affiliation between external appearance, performance and falseness is already on shaky ground.[20] While art tells us lies in order to reveal the truth, Maskwell tells the truth to perpetuate a falsehood. Instead of explaining it, Maskwell's hypocrisy overturns the function of art. Congreve's early fascination with hypocritical doubling in *The Double-Dealer* sets the stage for the way in which doubling in the end both constitutes and paradoxically undermines the humoral model of the self. The unraveling of Congreve's commitment to humors comedy is clearest in his acerbic response to Jeremy Collier's *Short View* (1698), the *Amendments of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect*

[20] Laura Brown observes that Maskwell "mak[es] not only his own face, but truth itself impervious to assessment" (1981, 127), and Aubrey Williams notes that Congreve self-consciously invokes the etymology of hypocrisy – "acting of a part on the stage, feigning, pretence" (OED, s.v. "hypocrisy") – to signal his constant awareness of the world-stage metaphor (1979, 109). I owe thanks to an anonymous external reader here, who helped me sort through the relationship between exteriority and hypocrisy.

Citations, in which the separation of hypocritical halves into inside and outside, essence and mask, truth and lies, is less and less sure.

The Amendments reiterates Congreve's fascination with the doubled self, yoking it to his understanding of how satire operates as a genre. In the *Amendments*, Congreve imagines Collier divided in two: a performing Collier and an observing Collier. This double-Collier is a figure for Congreve's audience more generally, revealing the effects as well as the mechanics of satire. Congreve's double-Collier shows us how satire models the fundamental operations of the mind. The *Amendments* stages a satirical mini-comedy, inviting us to "take a slight Sketch of [Mr. Collier] as he presents himself to us in his Book. Let Mr. *Collier* be represented as he is, not as he ought to be; that by seeing what he is, Mr. *Collier* may be asham'd of what he is, and endeavour at what he ought to be" (2011a, 3: 78). This is, of course, the function of satirical comedy. Satire sketches us out for our amendment; we are the objects of our own satirical gazes. But Congreve takes this self-observation and makes it yet more literal. "And that the Instruction of the Representation may not be lost, let us borrow that Distinction which severs the Priest from the Man," i.e., the distinction that allows the man to misbehave without sullying the reputation of the priest. Collier and his ilk are thus already divided in their hypocrisy, argues Congreve – he is just profiting by a pre-existing inconsistency. "Our Author being thus divided," he continues, "we will desire the better Part of him, to take his Place in the Pit, and let the other appear to him like his evil Genius on the Stage" (3: 79). Congreve narrates a series of actions and reactions on the part of "Mr. *Collier* on the Stage" and "Mr. *Collier*, in the Pit," culminating in Collier on the stage destroying poetry with his ignorance of its rules, and Collier in the pit reformed by his own bad example.

Congreve's satirical portrait of Collier is an extreme version of the self doubled by hypocrisy. In twinning Collier, however, Congreve takes his cue from Locke's famous definition of wit:

> *Wit* l[ies] most in the assemblage of ideas . . . *Judgment*, on the contrary, lies quite on the other side, in separating carefully, one from another, *Ideas*, wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by Similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another. This is a way of proceeding quite contrary to Metaphor and Allusion, wherein, for the most part, lies that entertainment and pleasantry of Wit, which strikes so lively on the Fancy.
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> (1975, 156-7; II.xi.2)

Locke's definition relies on the doubleness of metaphor, but implies a much larger mental system of fragmented impressions: an "assemblage of ideas." And where wit makes similes, marrying ideas together, judgement makes distinctions. Judgement is the capacity to separate the halves of a metaphor, to know tenor from vehicle. Thus Congreve writes:

> A Metaphor is a similitude in a Word, a short Comparison; and it is used as a similitude, to illustrate and explain the meaning. The Variety of *Ideas* in the Mind, furnish it with a variety of Matter for Similitudes; and those *Ideas* are only so many Impressions made on the Memory, by the force and frequency of external Objects.
>
> Pitiful and mean Comparisons, proceed from pitiful and mean *Ideas*; and such *Ideas* have their beginning from a familiarity with such Objects. From this Author's poor and filthy Metaphors and Similitudes, we may learn the filthiness of his Imagination; and from the Uncleanness of that, we may make a reasonable

> guess at . . . those Objects with which he has been most conversant and familiar. (2011a, 85-6)

Here, the objects that press on the mind are manipulated into alignment, as if the mind is a collection of their afterimages: "Matter for Similitudes." While Locke is notoriously allergic to metaphor, associating truth and reason with our ability to distinguish, rather than to join ideas, Congreve's picture of the psyche looks like a collection of mental objects waiting to be set side-by-side in poetical formation. His view of the way the mind orders ideas suggests a constant pairing or doubling of terms, and Collier's mind, clearly its own filthy place, reveals itself in its metaphors. Collier's reformation as a critic requires that he eject the ugly mental objects that crowd his mind. Congreve's satire, then, enacts its splitting move at the most fundamental level of mental operations. Collier-on-the-stage, acting as his own "evil Genius," is a kind of bad simile for Collier-in-the-pit. The divided Collier is really conceived at the level of language.

Fredric Bogel has argued that satire performs the socio-cultural work of scapegoating, and thus that what he calls "the difference satire makes" is really the "difference between readers and themselves" (2001, 113). Bogel's argument suggests that the casting-out performed by satire is an anthropological constant, but Congreve's new empiricist vision of the self in the *Amendments* shifts both the content and the method of abjection. The self described in the *Amendments* seems to copy and contain a much larger picture of the world. In pressing the doubleness of hypocrisy to its logical extreme in the jostling similes that constitute his version of the Lockean self, Congreve manages to undermine the logic of doubling with which he began. The neat inversion of the function of art that Maskwell's hypocrisy represents is here replaced by a self made up of interdependent terms that split to comment on one another and re-form in the potentially infinite alignments of metaphor. This is an empiricist mental order that suggests

associations among fragments of the self rather than a simple duality. While hypocrisy continues to be a target of Congreve's satire, especially the generalized hypocrisy of all social relations, his target is less frequently the malice of a Maskwell or a Fainall, and more often the affectations of a Witwoud or even a Millamant.

Hypocrisy and affectation are not easily distinguished, but Congreve is not the only one to find affectation the better comic target as the century drew on.[21] Hypocrisy consistently drew critical fire, but debates about it not infrequently came down on the side of moderate pretension.[22] In Henry Fielding's *Modern Husband* (1732), for example, Mr. Bellamant discusses the emptiness of a fashionable church with the foppish Lord Richly. Bellamant says, "This is, I believe, the only Age that has scorn'd a Pretence to Religion." Lord Richly responds: "Then it is the only Age that hath scorn'd Hypocrisy." Bellamant replies, "Rather, that Hypocrisy is the only Hypocrisy it wants" (2007, 2: 235). Where the options are hypocritical church-going or no church-going at all, essentially, hypocrisy is the better course. *The Modern Husband* is generally a darkly comic exposure of eighteenth-century society's multifarious hypocrisies, but here, emulation does not have to be sincere in order to serve a social purpose.

In his preface to *Joseph Andrews* (1742), Fielding categorized affectation as a subset of hypocrisy, arguing that affected persons were divided between two camps, the vain and the hypocrites, of which the vain were guilty of the more venial form of affectation. The "vain Man hath not the Virtue he affects, to the degree he would be thought to have it; yet it sits less aukwardly on him than on the [hypocrite] who *is* the very Reverse of what he would *seem* to be" (1970, 7). The point at which the lesser degree of virtue becomes "the very Reverse" is unclear,

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[21] For Stuart Tave, the move toward the correction of affectation, which counts as a folly rather than a vice, is part of the increasing humanization of eighteenth-century culture (1960, 98-99).
[22] For a study of the way in which hypocrisy, once a political tool, comes to be naturalized and feminized as a moral strategy over the course of the eighteenth century, see Davidson 2004.

as Fielding admits (6). There is a continuum on which vanity may be distinguished from absolute vice, rather than a sharp distinction between the two. Hypocrisy and affectation are matters of degree rather than of kind. Nonetheless, he insists: "as they proceed from very different Motives, so they are as clearly distinct in their Operations" (6-7). The "Affectation which arises from Vanity is nearer to Truth than the other," which is characterized by the hypocrite's struggle with a "violent Repugnancy of Nature" (7). The "very Reverse" of nature that defines hypocrisy still occupies a category apart from the absorption of feeling that increasingly comes to define affectation. Tellingly, to feign "nearer to Truth" could as easily be a definition of the aims of Fielding's new realism as it is his definition of an affected character. In contrast, Maskwell uses "Truth to cover Lies" (190; V.i.100). Affectation mimics truth while hypocrisy inverts it.

In 1753, Hogarth observed that ordinarily, character is written on the face "by the natural and unaffected movements of the muscles, caused by the passions of the mind" (1997, 96). Though he qualifies this statement by noting that different causes may produce the same expressions, that facial conformation may change the "marks" of the passions, and last and most importantly, that continued affectation might change facial expressions (96), he nonetheless sets hypocrisy apart as a separate category by which all natural expression is overturned. While "expressions of the countenance," despite these qualifications, provide a "description of the language written" in the mind, "the character of an hypocrite is entirely out of the power of the pencil" (96). Hypocrisy confounds the process of art itself, interfering not simply with the drawing of external expression, but also with a coherent narrative of identity. Like Fielding, Hogarth sees hypocrisy as the "very Reverse" of nature. However, he also sees the potential for affectation to change nature. Affectation might permanently mark the self, while hypocrisy remains a separable mask, interfering both with nature and with the legibility of its coded

gestures. For Hogarth, hypocrisy has a status outside, beyond, even directly overturning the purposes of art. Both of these highly influential practitioners of narrative take Congreve's distinction to be valid. Affectation is emulation that might mark the mimic while hypocrisy maintains a clear distinction, a "violent Repugnancy" between the mimic and his mask.

From Affectation to Sympathy:

The way sympathy functions later in the century echoes the fluidity of Congreve's distinction between inside and outside, his readily atomized self, and his insistence on a mimicking or mirroring process of self-making. Adam Smith writes that when we feel for someone, "we enter as it were into his body" (2002, 12), and that the passions "may seem to be transfused from one man to another" (13). Smith is clear that this is simply an illusion, but nonetheless, that the emotional responses of our society act as a "looking-glass" (130) in which we are forced to examine our own behavior and which we use as a method of moral regulation.

Neither Hogarth nor Fielding suggest an explicit link between sympathy and affectation, though their interest in the confusions of self and other that characterize both seems to hint at the possibility. Neil Saccamano's discussion of Hume's theory of taste, however, allows us to see the similarity of their underlying logic. He argues that Hume's ideas about taste anticipate his larger argument about sympathy. Integral to Hume's aesthetic theory, he observes, is the notion of "self-parting," a "displacement" of the individual for the position of another that presumes the displacement of the self already to be constitutive of selfhood. Thus he writes: "To be a particular person is to be moved toward others in a way that both supports and unsettles the presumption of autonomous identity" (2006, 184). The simultaneous mimicry and displacement of self-parting is fully articulated in the concept of affectation, which is, by definition, a performance predicated upon a sympathetic repositioning. In Hume, Saccamano argues, we see the formation of the

subject in the process of its sympathetic movement towards another subject-position. In this empiricist model, as in Locke's, the self is constituted by an absorption and replication of the world, but here, sympathy is essential to subject-formation. Saccamano's argument allows us to see the way in which sympathy's intersubjective logic unites empiricist narratives of self with emotional dispositions. I want to suggest that the comic treatment of affectation, particularly in Congreve's criticism, anticipates the self-parting of sympathy, exposing the origins of the insertion of the passions into empiricist discourse. Affectation and sympathy are nearly indistinguishable. While sympathy absorbs and replicates emotion, affectation is a performance of otherness that equally absorbs the other into the self. These affective methods of constituting the self suggest that interpersonal mimicry is inevitably integral to the mimetic self envisioned by empiricism.

This interpersonal mimicry takes us, not simply away from hypocrisy and humor and toward affectation and its cognitive correlate, empiricism, but also toward the old seventeenth-century territory of the passions. Daniel Larlham observes, of Malebranche's influential theories of emotion, that they posit an "imitative-affective disposition" (2012, 439); Jacqueline Miller notes of Renaissance emotions that "it is the nature of passions – in particular their mimetic properties and their transferability – to create similitude" (2001, 418); and most recently, Brian Cummings and Freya Sierhuis have introduced their collection on the passions with the observation that early modern ideas of emotion incorporate a "*mimetic* language of the passions" (2013, 7). These critics all point out the central importance of the imitative function of the passions. Inherent in the early modern model of the self is the idea that passions are infectious, and that emotions create in us an imitative tendency. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse have argued that, with Locke, "[m]odern theories of the emotions began as a

refutation of the humoral model of the passions" (2006, 132). Somewhat counterintuitively, however, there is no "humoral model of the passions." The passions and the humors are separate somatic systems. For the most part, they occupy separate discursive spaces, with the passions occupying the more theoretical space, treated by moral philosophers: Descartes, Hobbes, Malebranche, and Spinoza, as well as lesser-known seventeenth-century moral and natural philosophers like Jean François Seneault, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and Walter Charleton at the end. It is true, however, that even in medical terminology, the humors had fallen out of favor by the end of the seventeenth century. They were simply assumed as the background to new models of the body driven by mechanical anatomy, some by Cartestian mechanism, others by Newtonian physics.[23] William Cowper's *Myotomia* (1724), for example, deliberately rejected Descartes for Newton, and attempted a lengthy mathematical and physical proof that the muscles are a sort of pulley system operated by mechanistic forces. In some ways, the common

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[23] A 1640 text by a man with the unlikely name of Nicholas Abraham de la Framboisière offers a quick guide to self-diagnosis: *An easy Method to know the Causes and Signs of the Humour most ruleth in the Body, and to avoid thereby things hurtful*. A sanguine temperament, for example, reveals "manners of mind pleasant and sweet, calm and gentle: For a temperate and mild disposition of mind, is a mark of a temperate habit of body" (2). A choleric temperament can be diagnosed, helpfully, by "The hair yellow, for yellow hair is the dreggy excrement of yellow Choler" (3). A cheap pamphlet, this is really just the WebMD of its day, and speaks to a general cultural investment in the humors, rather than to current seventeenth-century medicine, which was occupied with innovations based on the relatively new science of anatomy. Better-known texts like John Bulwer's *Pathomyotomia* (London, 1640) and Thomas Willis's *Five Treatises* (London, 1681) combine new scholarly work on anatomy and the passions with assumptions about the motive power of the humors. Willis, for example, alternates between defining humors according to the Galenic model, as substances associated with temperamental imbalances, and defining them more generally as mobile substances with particular qualities. So drink, by ingestion, becomes a humor: "the humor, or liquid substance daily taken" (2), while "Atrabilious" and "Atrabiliary" are defined as "*Belonging to the black Bile or melancholy, or to the melancholic humour.*" ("Table of all the hard words"). Bulwer barely mentions the humors, but assumes their underlying significance: the "materiall caus" of knitted brows in grief, he says, is "a melancholly humour affected and kindled with much heat, which sends up a salt vapour to the Face, which pluckes the Muscles of the Forehead" (147-48). We can see here that humors are falling out of fashion as a method of medical diagnosis and treatment, but are still a key element of eighteenth-century popular medicine as well as of characterology, both literary and otherwise.

go-to text for seventeenth-century scholars of the passions, Thomas Wright's *Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604),[24] is a departure both from the new emphasis on anatomy and from the late sixteenth-century norm exemplified by Rudolph Goclenius, Laurent Joubert, and Johannes Knauer. These physicians and natural philosophers tended to taxonomize the passions and examine their physiology after the classical model laid out by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*, Cicero in his *Orator*, and Lucretius in *De Rerum Natura*.[25] None discuss the humors. Wright's treatment of both systems in the one treatise was somewhat unusual, though he was followed in this by Marin Cureau de la Chambre.[26] Both Wright's and Cureau de la Chambre's treatises on the passions were widely influential and much reprinted in the period. But even Wright, though he argued that the passions could affect the humors, altering the bodily constitution, maintained a firm separation between the systems. Where the passions occupied a place "betwixt witte and wille and sense" (1604, 7), partaking of both, the humors belonged solely to the body, despite the fact that their expression could manifest as personal peculiarity. The humors "wait upon the Passions" (4).

It is common in current criticism not to distinguish firmly between the humors and the passions.[27] They frequently appear as equal parts of a single system, indistinguishably participants in both physiological and psychological aspects of the early modern self. Joseph Roach brilliantly argues that the eighteenth-century move toward a mechanistic, Cartesian model

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[24] The first, shorter edition of Wright's *Passions of the Minde* was published in 1601.
[25] See Goclenius, *Physiologia de Risu et Lacrumis* (1597). Goclenius insists both on the healthiness of laughter (16) and on its physiological and non-physiological causes (17-20). See also Joubert, *Treatise on Laughter* (1579); Knauer, *De Risu* (1607); and Iossii, *De Voluptate et Dolore, de Risu et Fletu, Somno et Vigilia* (1603). Knauer argues that laughter originates in the brain and the diaphragm (61). The first edition of Knauer's text was published undated and anonymously.
[26] Cureau de la Chambre, *Characters* (1649).
[27] See, e.g., introduction to Selleck 2008 and Miller 2001

of the body involved dispensing with the humors (1985, 80). But he also argues that the humors were previously understood to activate as well as to be upset by the passions (39). To this end, he cites Wright's *Passions of the Minde*, as well as Bulwer's *Pathomyotomia* (1649). He quotes Wright's index: "How do humours of the *body* stirre up Passions. . . . Or, why do Passions engender *corporal* humors" (Wright 1604, 306; Roach 1985, 29, my emphasis). Though Wright here suggests that humors might influence the passions, he insists in the body of the treatise that passions are "actes of the sensitive power, or facultie of our *soule*" or "a sensual motion of our appetitive facultie, through imagination of some good or ill thing" which "alter the humours of our *bodies*," and that "passions then be certaine internall actes or operations of the *soule*, bordering upon reason and sense … *causing* … some alteration in the body" (1604, 8). While Wright may seem to us to be splitting hairs (the passions are sensual appetites having to do with the soul and the imagination as well as the body; the humors are emphatically corporeal), the distinction was significant and frequently echoed in the period.[28] Roach sees the passions as essential to mechanistic models of the self in the eighteenth century; I think the passions are essential modifiers of empiricist self-making.

Congreve's work reveals a moment in which the two models – the humors and the passions – are in contention, and he also reveals the deciding factor in the contest: the passions align themselves more easily with an empiricist model of the self. The passions come to dominate eighteenth-century discourses of emotion[29] first, because they take us farther from the

[28] Angus Gowland has recently taken issue with this critical habit. He disarticulates the humors from the passions, and cites the passage from Wright, above, to support his claim that "no early modern writer . . . gave [an] . . . account of the passions which reduced them to the status of purely physical effects of the humours and the spirits" (2013, 89).
[29] See Rorty 1982 and Roach 1985.

body than do the humors,[30] and second, because they emphasize the impressionable, imitative self. Empiricist epistemology grounds knowledge in the material body, so this claim may appear contradictory. What Congreve shows us, however, is that empiricism is equally about the impressibility of the self, its availability to the experience, not simply of objects, but also of its social and affective environment.

I want to return in this section to Congreve's letter to Dennis, "Concerning Humour in Comedy," in order to make a different point: that Congreve is, in spite of himself, as invested in the passions as he is in humor. This letter, though it appears to come down firmly on the side of humors comedy, in the end initiates a theoretical trajectory that ends with the faint but reverberative suggestion of an alignment between comic affectation and sympathy. In his letter to Dennis, Congreve maintains the distinct roles of the passions and the humors in mental organization, but treats them as tightly interdependent systems, operating synchronically. The passions, in most philosophical and popular iterations, are still, at the turn of the eighteenth century, closely related to their etymological origin in the Latin deponent, *patior*, "to suffer." They are, though with increasing difficulty after Descartes' *Passions of the Soul* (1649), tied to passivity.[31] He distinguishes passions from humors thus: "I dont doubt, but you have observed several Men Laugh when they are Angry; others who are Silent; some that are Loud: Yet I cannot suppose that it is the passion of *Anger* which is in it self different, or more or less in one than t'other; but that it is the *Humour* of the Man that is Predominant, and urges him to express it in

[30] As Dixon observes, some kinds of passions, "moral sentiments and affections, were potentially rational as well as being warm and lively states of mind" (2006, 64).

[31] In 1621 Nicholas Coeffeteau struggled to manage the apparent contradiction between the visible effects of the passions and their theoretically passive nature: "the word Passion is taken here for a change, which is made in man, contrary to his naturall constitution and disposition, from the which hee is as it were wrested by this change. In which sense the Phylosophers say, that things suffer, when as they are drawne from their naturall disposition, to a course that is contrary to their nature" (1621, 20). On passivity and the passions, see also James 1997.

that manner" (2011b, 69).[32] Passions, for Congreve, are shared, universal, and stable; their expression, in contrast, is dictated by humor. At least theoretically, the humoral system moves behavior and emotion in the opposite direction to the movement of the passions. Passions are responses to sensations that have moved inward across the boundary of the body to the mind; humors are peculiarities of bodily constitution that have moved outward across the boundary of the body to make themselves felt in the world. Passions press in; humors act out.[33]

Congreve's precision in defining humor and distinguishing it from passion appears all the more deliberate when we take Dryden's loose definition of humor into account: "among the *English* . . . by humour is meant some extravagant habit, passion, or affection; particular . . . to some one person: by the oddness of which, he is immediately distinguish'd from the rest of men" (1971, 60-1). Dryden also observes, however, that Jonson was not inclined "to move the Passions; . . . Humour was his proper Sphere" (57). Congreve's more theoretical bent commits him to the passivity and impressibility of the self. His work moderates empiricist models in two essential ways: he makes it clear that the empiricist model of cognition emerges out of preexisting literary and linguistic models, and he makes it impossible to separate empiricism and emotion.

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[32] This description of passions altered in their expression according to the humor of the individual echoes Wright's claim that "the same passion affecteth diuers persons in diuers manners" according to their predominant humor (1604, 37). See also Paster's discussion of Wright's claim in the service of a somewhat different argument (2004, 14-7).

[33] The difficulty of maintaining this theoretical position while still arguing for the codification of the passions as physiognomic signifiers of mental states is clear in Marin Cureau de la Chambre's popular treatise, *The Characters of the Passions*, translated in 1649 and much reprinted in England. Cureau de la Chambre attempts to solve the problem by separating the passions (inward agitations) from the *characters* of the passions (external expressions caused by spirits expelled from the soul): "the essence of human actions consists in the inward emotion which the object forms in the appetite . . . So anger is nothing but a desire of Vengeance; and in the pursuit of that emotion, the soul produceth exterior actions, which may serve to this purpose . . . which we call Characters because they express and discover the alteration and interior motion of the appetite" (1649, 4-5).

He goes on in the letter to discuss responses to pleasure: according to their humor, one person "hugs himself alone, and thinks it an Addition to the pleasure to keep it Secret. Another is upon Thorns till he has made Proclamation of it" (2011b, 69). Pleasure is not a passion proper, observes Locke, but rather one of the "hinges on which our *Passions* turn."[34] The passion itself – joy? – thus manifests according to humor, and humor *locates* the passion inside or outside the body. Congreve then examines grief, and last, love, which is best judged by "the Ladies who abound in Servants" (70). Love leads him to theorize the humors of women, and to conclude that, in fact, they haven't any. "Perhaps," he speculates, "Passions are too powerful in that Sex, to let Humour have its Course" (70). The pressure of the passions blocks the course of the humors: they cannot be externalized in the passive female economy. Indeed, he continues, "if ever any thing does appear Comical or Ridiculous in a Woman, I think it is little more than an acquir'd Folly, or an Affectation" (70). In women, affectation replaces humor. The passions, which are universal, are moderated in their expression by the humors, and so Congreve's construction is suggestive in several different ways: first, it argues for greater uniformity among women than men; second, it suggests that personality and passion are mutually exclusive, so that persons dominated by passion are *less*, rather than more, individualized; third, it implies that humors, naturalized to men, are less pathological than passions; last, and most interestingly, it suggests that Congreve, in his shift to affectation as the major target of his satire, came to understand this feminine psychic economy as more generally representative than the humorous, masculine economy.[35]

In some ways, in fact, he had got there earlier. In *Love for Love*, Congreve compares

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[34] *Essay* 1975, 229; II.xx.3.

[35] This is particularly interesting in light of Paster's (2004) argument that discourses of the humors in Renaissance drama often served to reinforce claims to male individuation and individuality. See chapter four, "Belching Quarrels."

women to Locke's *tabula rasa* – "white Paper, void of all Characters, without any *Ideas*" (1967, 104; II.i.2) – but he also makes this comparison in *The Double-Dealer*. Lady Plyant compares herself to "a fair Sheet of Paper" (145; II.i.259-60), and Angelica, "a Woman" is "all white, a sheet of lovely spotless Paper, when you first are Born" (292; IV.i.634-8). Again, Congreve conflates an empiricist model of the mind with much older ways of thinking about how we manage personality. Women's impressibility here is figured both as virginal innocence destined to be stained, and as the ultimate representation of the Lockean impressible mind, the record of conscious experience that makes a self. This representative mental state of blankness is both vaguely insulting and profoundly idealizing. If we are all made to be written upon, we are all books of the world, collections of experiences, and most importantly, records of our relations with others.

Congreve's championing of a masculinized concept of humors in the letter "Concerning Humour" seems subtly to quarrel with Dennis's view of the passions. In an earlier letter to Congreve that was part of this exchange, Dennis wrote: "to touch a Passion is the surest way to Delight. For nothing Agitates like it. Agitation is the health and Joy of the Soul" (1964, 175). In Congreve's response, the curative properties Dennis assigns to the agitation of the passions are ignored in favor of the moral value of humor, which, he says, is "almost of English Growth," and is produced in England by "the great Freedom, Privilege, and Liberty which the Common People of *England* enjoy. Any Man that has a Humour, is under no restraint, or fear of giving it Vent" (2011b, 71). Despite the fact that Congreve is only equivocally approving of this liberty of the common people, and that he suggests that men are more humorous than women because their "Follies are Stronger, and [their] Faults are more prevailing" (70), he nonetheless clings to a model of English comedy that privileges peculiarity over passion. Where Dennis sees passion, in

the uniformity of its impact, as both curative and sociable – i.e. building connections between author and audience, audience-member and audience-member – Congreve here resists this very universalizing power of passion in favor of the sociable potential of individualized humors.

Derek Hughes argues that Congreve remains deeply committed to individualism, that he maintains the privacy and self-determination of "the essence of the individual" (1996, 382). Hughes thus contends that Congreve's satire is reserved for "[t]he legible character," transparent because it is "the one that is written by another hand" (383). When Congreve defines humor and affectation, however, he suggests the ease with which we might all overwrite ourselves in the hand of another. In his letter to Dennis he explains that the distinction between humor and affectation is one of the "Nicest" of the series of distinctions he makes between humor and other qualities. "*Affectation is generally mistaken for Humour*," he explains:

> These are indeed so much alike, that at a Distance, they may be mistaken one for the other. For what is *Humour* in one, may be *Affectation* in another; and nothing is more common, than for some to affect particular ways of saying, and doing things, peculiar to others, whom they admire and would imitate. *Humour* is the Life, *Affectation* the Picture. He that draws a Character of *Affectation*, shews *Humour* at the Second Hand; he at best but publishes a Translation, and his Pictures are but Copies. (2011b, 66)

The difficulty with affectation is its imitative character. First, affectation is the imitation of some behavior "naturally" belonging to another. So, affectation, like a picture, imitates nature. And then he who depicts affectation is imitating an imitation. This author "at best but publishes a Translation, and his Pictures are but Copies." Oddly, then, the author who imitates affectation becomes like the affected person he depicts. And as a consequence, the imitation of an imitation

elevates the original imitator; affectation becomes artistry. The affected character is the author of the original text or painting that the dramatist then merely translates or copies. Congreve's resistance to affectation overturns its own logic. In the process of imitating imitation, of painting a picture of affectation, Congreve turns away from the peculiarity of humor and towards our common passions. In their commonality, Congreve finds a new picture of the mimetic mind and a newly powerful way of figuring artistic replication.

Deidre Lynch has observed that, in this period, "recognizing a face, or putting a name to a face, one replayed what eighteenth-century philosophy of mind valued as the most basic cognitive operation: that of discriminating and then weighing samenesses and differences" (1998, 33). Lynch's analysis allows us to understand Congreve's anxiety about affectation, then, as an anxiety about the potential for this discriminatory capacity to disappear in the face of copies, translations, imitations, and of course, the infinite replicability of typographic "characters." And not coincidentally, translations and copies were very often the tasks of Grub Street hacks or engravers paid to pirate the original paintings on display in London shops. Affectation is a kind of runaway replication, making true art indistinguishable from the "Translation[s]" and "Copies" that have cornered the market,[36] true humor impossible to pick out. But what affectation has in common with printing, it also has in common with the *im*printing effects of the passions. The distinction between humors and passions, on which Congreve here insists, is also a defense against seventeenth-century theories of the replicability of the passions and the susceptibility of the mind to their impressions.

When Congreve began his career, feeling had not yet accrued a special status outside and apart from artifice and illusion. In the seventeenth century, feeling could itself be a mask, and

[36] See Peters 1991, 120.

even when they were perceived as true indications of an internal state, the passions belonged as much to the surface of the body as to the mind. Passions had particular gestural and expressive markers, and might be donned and doffed at will.[37] Charles Allen argues, in an essay on the transition between classical and Baroque painting, that Charles Le Brun's concern to figure the passions schematically in his 1668 *Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière* is a response to Descartes' *Passions of the Soul*, and that Le Brun's interest in facial expression marks a key turning-point in seventeenth-century notions of the function of art. Le Brun's schematization of the passions – as against the particularity of expression in the painting of Nicolas Poussin – aims to replicate the expression of passion over a variety of faces. As Allen observes, Le Brun's interest in "passions considered as immediate corporeal reactions to outside stimuli; as atomistic states; as the reactions of isolated individuals" (1998, 89) causes him to begin, in history painting, with the bystanders' reaction to the event, rather than with the "moral, metaphysical and poetic significance" of the event itself. Le Brun's was an educational project, too – he envisions a future of infinite replication of the same passions over an infinite variety of faces, resisting, as Allen notes, "the modification of affective response by the complex of other circumstances surrounding the individual" (87). Allen is critical of what turns out to be Le

[37] For a history of the passions in the Renaissance, see Gail Kern Paster's *Humoring the Body*; for seventeenth-century context, see Michael Schoenfeldt's *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England.* The most sophisticated expressions of this new interest in philosophies of the passions as the seventeenth century drew on were Descartes' *Les Passions de l'Ame* (1649) [The Passions of the Soul] in France and the first book of Hobbes's *Leviathan* (1651) in England. A series of essays and treatises followed in England, ranging from Walter Charleton's *Natural History of the Passions* (London, 1674) to John Dennis's Longinian literary criticism, to Francis Hutcheson's *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (1728). Discourses of the passions were closely tied to physiology; they were thus easily incorporated by disciplines ranging from painting (see Charles Le Brun, *Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulaire* [1667]) to acting (see, e.g., Samuel Foote, *A Treatise on the Passions* [1747] and Aaron Hill, *An Essay on the Art of Acting* [1749]). For a full treatment of the relationship of seventeenth-century discussions of the passions and a new mechanistic physiology to eighteenth-century acting, see Roach 1985.

Brun's anti-individualist, ahistorical approach – Le Brun refuses, in Allen's view, the complexity of individualized, singular events, and of individualized, singular persons. Congreve is consciously providing an antidote to Le Brun's schematization of emotion. Le Brun's system graphically inscribes the relatively new seventeenth-century belief in the replicability of affect across individuals.[38] In 1695, Congreve wishes to preserve the "modification of affective response," not as circumstantial, but rather as natural: the passions are filtered through the humors to produce individualized responses.

Congreve's resistance to the force of the passions in aesthetic theory, and his preference for the more individualistic model of the humors is in the end undermined by his equally strong commitment to an empiricist model of the self. This model interferes irreparably with the humors model. Congreve's increasing interest in affectation, an interest that is reiterated by Fielding, arguably the most important mid-century theorist of comedy, is a kind of giving way to imitative models of the mind. What affectation and passion seem to have in common is commonality itself. Affectation makes peculiarity common, and passion makes a commons of individual feeling. Both affectation and passion prioritize the impressionable, rather than the expressive self. Imitative models, driven by the passions as much as by empiricism, take us away from the fixed psychic economy of the humors. Rooted in a stable bodily economy analogous to an ideally orderly universe, the humors align us with the elements of the natural world, not with our complex social context. Affectation prefigures a malleable psyche determined by sympathetic social interaction. But affectation is also an art to make a self.

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[38] While Aristotle's *Rhetorica* seems to suggest something like this, as Daniel Gross has pointed out, in fact the *Rhetorica* formulates an idea of the passions that is deeply and carefully socially determined and discursively constructed. See Gross 2006.

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